AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the sentence appearing on page 18, lines 15-19 with the following sentence:

If the "Acc" has not been received from the local link (step **636:NO**), the operation returns to step [[610]] **632** where a determination is made as to whether or not the port login frame has been received from the external link.

Please replace the sentence appearing on page 13, line 28 to page 14, line 2 with the following sentence:

Buffer management/forwarder **426** directs the forwarding of received frames to the proper transmitter based on the input from frame header [[rack]] crack **404**.